

CONFERENCE OF CHAIRS

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION
SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2008
ALA WAI GOLF COURSE CLUB HOUSE
404 KAPAHULU AVENUE
8 – 12 NOON

- I. **WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS:** The conference began at 8:30 am with welcoming remarks from Joan Manke and Grant Tanimoto.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner's Ed Gall, Ron Mobley, Jeanette Nekota, and Grant Tanimoto (Chair)

Guest Speakers: Paul Tsukiyama (Director, Office of Information Practices) and Caryn Kunz (Honolulu Advertiser's People Publications).

Board Chairs and Vice Chairs (or designee): Greg Knudsen and Elizabeth Reilly (Hawaii Kai NB No. 1), Ed Schell (VC, Kuliouou NB No. 2), Kelley Roberson (Waialae Kahala NB No. 3), Sharon Schneider (VC, Kaimuki NB No. 4), Michelle Matson (designee, Diamond Head/Kapahulu/St. Louis Heights NB No. 5), Rachel Orange (Palolo NB No. 6), Tom Heinrich (Manoa NB No. 7), Ron Lockwood and Serena Kyi-Yim (McCully/Mo'ili'ili NB No. 8), Louis Erteschik and Mike Peters (VC and Secretary, Waikiki NB No. 9), Charles Carole (VC, Makiki NB No. 10), Ann Stevens (Ala Moana NB No. 11), Paula Kurashige (VC, Nuuanu NB No. 12), Frank Lavoie and Anthony Marlin (Downtown NB No. 13), Lori Santos (VC, Kailihi Valley NB No. 16), Maurice Morita (VC, Aliamanu/Salt Lake/Foster Village NB No. 18), William Clark and Jane Sugimura (Aiea NB No. 20), James Pickard and Cruz Vina (Pearl City NB No. 21), Richard Oshiro (Waipahu NB No. 22), Rich Hargrave (Ewa NB No. 23), Richard Poirier (Mililani/Waipio/Melemanu NB No. 25), Jyun Yamamoto (Wahiawa NB No. 26), Michael Lyons (North Shore NB No. 27), Roy Yanagihara and Christopher Steele (Kaneohe NB No. 30), Jon Chinen (Kailua NB No. 32), Dean Hazama and Pamela Young (Mililani Mauka NB No. 25).

- II. **STATE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION OFFICE:** Joan Manke highlighted the following:

- The Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO) has a staffing of 16 positions with one vacant position.
- The NCO staff works night shifts by taking minutes for Neighborhood Boards.
- The focus of the NCO is to follow the Sunshine Law, provide quality minutes, and meet the minute preparation deadlines.

- III. **STATE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION AND ITS ACTIVITIES:** Grant Tanimoto highlighted the following:

- Introduced participating Commissioners – Ron Mobley, Ed Gall, and Jeanette Nekota.
- Act 153, which relates to changes to the Sunshine Law, passed this year.
- The Revised Neighborhood Plan is in the finalization phase and a copy was provided in the packets that were distributed.
- A round table discussion will be a part of the conference agenda and index cards are provided for writing questions and/or comments throughout the session. The main reason for this discussion is to gain feedback.

- IV. **SUNSHINE LAW – IMPACT OF ACT 153 ON NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS:** Paul Tsukiyama, the Director of the Office of Information Practices (OIP) provided updates on new Sunshine Law amendments. He highlighted on the following revisions:

- The OIP has two statutory functions:
 - To administer public records law
 - To administer the sunshine law
- Now Neighborhood Boards can act in different ways from other government boards and commissions.
- The Sunshine Law still applies except for Act 153 and its provisions. Act 153 is divided into three sections – Notice and agenda, public input, and quorum.

- An agenda must be submitted at least 6 days before a board meeting.
- If an item is on the agenda and the board is unsure whether or not they will be taking action on the item it is safe to indicate "for action" for this item just so the public is informed that action might be taken on the item. A Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) has been formed to work on a template for agendas that might include a disclaimer of "items may be taken for action."
- Neighborhood Boards are able to take input and discuss non-agenda items and encourage public input, but the decision-making on this item will be deferred to a future meeting's agenda. There has been legislative concern on this issue in case the NB members would go into a decision-making mode although the vote would be deferred to a future meeting.
- No decision-making can happen without a quorum and the testimony must be reported to the next meeting. If the meeting is short of quorum, public input can be taken. It must be stressed that whatever is reported at this meeting is reported at the next meeting. There are no specific procedures given for this and it is up to the board.
- OIP doesn't administer the new Neighborhood Board section.
- It is important to note that no more than 2 people can be involved in discussing board business. This is to ensure that the public has equal involvement on discussion of board issues.
- Two or more members of a board, but less than the amount needed for quorum may attend community meetings unless the meeting is exclusively or directed toward members of a board. If a meeting is attended, board members need to report back everything that happened.
- If an issue relates to public health, safety, or welfare and requires immediate action, the Neighborhood Boards are allowed to take action on non-agenda items. This requires a 2/3 vote and a statement in writing. Imminent peril and unanticipated events are necessary to take action. OIP is not the ultimate decision maker in this, but they only serve as an administrative body.
- The new law alleviates many situations where Neighborhood Board members would have been required to establish a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG), but members still can not meet and discuss board issues without a PIG.
- The PIG was originally established in order to have a smaller group investigate a particular interest and report the results to the whole board. A PIG should be used only for one specific purpose and not supposed to handle multiple tasks.

V. KEEP ON CUE: Rachel Glanstein, the NCO Staff Parliamentarian passed out a handout and highlighted:

- The Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO) prepared sets of cue cards for the Neighborhood Board (NB) Chairs to assist with "running smoother meetings." The cue cards will be updated because of the changes in the Sunshine Law and adoption of the new Neighborhood Plan (NP).
- A set of cards will be given to a rule-oriented member of the Board, preferably the Vice Chair or time-keeper, who should sit next to the Chair.
- It is encouraged that the Boards adopt a time limit policy.
- The Chair is prohibited in taking part of any debates unless he relinquishes the gavel when debating. If the Chair relinquishes the gavel to speak, he may not resume the gavel until the entire issue is handled.
- Unanimous consent can help the Board to quickly accomplish routine business, such as correction and approval of the minutes.
- Point of Order and Appeal are very important because they relate to the enforcement of the rules. The Board member raising the Point of Order must be able to explain what rule is being broken. The Chair will then determine if this is valid or invalid. An Appeal is raised when a Board member disagrees with a ruling of Chair. It is usually voted on by the Board.
- Robert's Rules of Order current edition is the parliamentary authority.
- There are cue cards, which address specific motions and are ranked from 1 to 13. Many of these motions require a majority of the votes cast to adopt and should be handled in the order they are numbered.

VI. NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PANEL – A REVIEW OF HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEWLY ADOPTED PLAN: A handout was distributed listing highlights of the New Plan, and Tom Heinrich, Joan Manke and Grant Tanimoto noted the following:

- The new plan was recently sent to Mayor Hannemann and is awaiting his signature. After he signs, it will be filed with the City Clerk and 10 days after the filing, it will become effective.

- From now on it is best to refer to this handbook as the Neighborhood Plan (NP) and there is no need to use the term "revised."
- There have been comprehensive revisions to the Rules and Procedures to the Neighborhood Commission (Chapter 11) and Neighborhood Plan (Chapters 12 – 20).
- The creation of the Council of Chairs is included in the new Neighborhood Plan.
- One of the most important changes is that the board term of office will remain at 2 years and there will be no term limits. The time period has changed from the original June 1st – May 31st to July 1st – June 30th in order to match the fiscal year. The issue about term limits came before the City Council, but was deferred indefinitely. Neighborhood Board positions are voluntary with no compensation and there many vacancies that are difficult to fill.
- The deadline for run in the 2009 election will no longer be the 3rd Tuesday of January, but will be the 3rd Friday in February. Please start encouraging fellow board members or other interested community members to consider being candidates in the 2009 election. More time is allowed for a registered voter to get a new ballot.
- Regarding the scope of responsibilities of the board members, it doesn't matter if the member was elected to a sub-district or at-large, each member has a say in all matters of the district as a whole.
- The changes made to the determination of the board chair pro term for the initial convening of the new term, is determined by who has the longest continuous service on the board. As far as if more than one member has the longest continuous service, this issue will need to be followed up by the Commission.
- A greatly revised review and complaint process has been set forth.
- The plan gives more authority to intervene in order and decorum and although this isn't anything new, it is now specifically included in the NP.
- If there are any questions that arise, members should call the Neighborhood Commission Office (NCO).
- Boards may establish committees from among their membership and from the public. Committees may appoint delegates that are non-board members. The committee may not be allowed to take action, but rather is created to make recommendations to the board. The Board will be the only one allowed to make the decision.
- In order for the meeting to run more smoothly and effectively, disorderly persons may be expelled from the board and committee meetings.
- Every member has the opportunity to place items on the agenda via the Chair or board as a whole.

THERE WAS A SHORT RECESS AND REFRESHMENTS WERE SERVED.

VII. MEDIA PARTNERSHIP: Caryn Kunz presented the Honolulu Advertiser's People Publications, whose goal is to push community news. She passed out a handout and highlighted:

- The Mobile journalists' (MOJOS) living in these communities cover at least seven different areas of Oahu.
- Introduced myAdvertiser.com/People, a free sit featuring stories, a calendar of local events, a venue to blog on stories, and a photo gallery of daily life. This is a free way to promote, announce, or highlight events, forums, contacts, and links within specific regions.
- In order to submit a story or photo on myAdversiter.com/ People one must first be a registered user and then follow the directions.
- For more information visit myAdvertiser.com or email myadvertiser@honoluluadvertiser.com or call or write to the Editor, James Gonser at 535-2431 or jgonser@honoluluadvertiser.com.

Comments followed:

- When submitting stories, photos, or event notices, it is best to send it directly to myAdvertiser.com otherwise items might not get posted if sent to the regular newsroom.
- The site gets about 130,000 – 150,000 hits a month.
- Posted items will remain on the website until it's deleted.
- Items to be posted are first reviewed by Kunzor Gonser before going on the website. This site is checked and updated daily; Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 5 pm and twice on weekends.
- The request to post Police statistics can be accommodated only if time permits.

- If your Neighborhood Board would like a presentation given to them, please contact James Gonser or Caryn Kunz.

VIII. ROUNDTABLE – TALK STORY:

- Trick or Treat for Safer Streets: Ron Lockwood of the McCully – Moiliili Board advised that the AARP and AIG statewide initiative to increase awareness of the need for pedestrian safety is in need of volunteers. They are needed in each neighborhood, at the most dangerous intersections, to sign wave on October 30th from 7:30 am to 8:30 am. Conference participants asked that this information be provided by email.
- Commission Training Committee: Jeanette Nekota, the Commission Training Committee Chair reported:
 - A survey was sent out three years ago to the Neighborhood Boards, but unfortunately only a few were returned. Of those returned, the main emphasis was on training.
 - The committee is looking at training schedules; however, very few people participate in these training sessions. There have been suggestions to put the training issues and procedures on the NCO website. The committee is continuously trying to improve.
 - The committee is deliberating on a calendar schedule for training of the new NP and is hoping to get a 2 year schedule plan out with the new elections
 - The committee is considering passing out DVDs of training or creating a video library linked to the NCO's website for easy access.
 - Certified Parliamentarian Rachel Glanstein is also available in-house to answer any parliamentary questions.
 - Sunshine law training is in progress and will be made available soon.

Discussion followed focusing on embracing and welcoming new board members and educating existing board members on the process of interacting with the City. On its website, www.honolulu.gov/nco, which is continuously updated, the NCO has resource information available which includes the Neighborhood Plan, Parliamentary Procedures, and the Sunshine Law.

- Minutes Template: Ron Mobley noted that currently, the Neighborhood Plan specifically says that meetings will be run by Robert's Rules of Order and that meeting minutes should be an abbreviated form of what happened and not verbatim. Motions should reflect in discussion a pro and cos point of view and not who gave them.
 - A concern was expressed by a Chair about motions and public concerns being abbreviated. He felt that the issues of resident concerns or long discussions should have more emphasis and shouldn't be too short.
 - Another Chair felt that NB members are elected and their constituents need to know the positions taken by the members in order to make sure they're being represented. Therefore, their names need to be in the minutes.
 - OIP states that there is only a need to express community member comments in very general terms and there is no need to mention their names.
 - For decision making items or where motions are involved or action is taken, names of the Board members are important and should be mentioned. The minutes should reflect a summary of the idea of a board member and should not be verbatim. The point of the minutes is to show the decision making of the decision making body.
 - The Board members are responsible for the minutes and can correct them at the meetings. The minutes should show how all the members voted on board votes to show which side of the issue they are voting for.
 - Late minutes given to the Chair to be reviewed within 24 hours or less are not acceptable. The Neighborhood Commission (NC) is targeting efficient, timely, and quality minutes. The NC is trying to come up with a standard for the Neighborhood Assistants (NA) to follow. Templates for the format of the agenda and minutes will be helpful for the NAs.
 - An approval of the board is needed in order to attach documents to the minutes. These documents will not be attached and sent out through postal mail because of the costs involved, but a reference will be made in the minutes that there are attached documents. The attachments will remain in the NCO and can be publicly viewed.

- Manke will explore the possibility of linking the attached documents to the minutes on the NCO website.
- A Chair mentioned that the Boards could scan and send electronic versions for the NCO to post on the website to alleviate some of the workload on the NCO staff.
- Any resolutions must be part of the minutes since it is considered official action. It can be copy and pasted into the end of the minutes document.
- A request was made that Boards have input in the development of the minute template..
- Parliamentary Procedures:
 - As long as Board members are not representing the NB or discussing Board items, then it is fine to have a majority of Board members at events such as public information meetings.
 - A Chair asked if action can be taken on a resident's concern. This concern needs to be put on the agenda for the next meeting because it requires public notification. Comments can be received, but no action can be taken. Action means that a vote will be taken. Talking about next steps to prepare for this at the next meeting will be allowed.
 - There are two types of business that the Board can take action on if they are on the agenda – unfinished and new business.
- Neighborhood Plan:
 - Heinrich noted that the Neighborhood Plan is almost complete and if there any comments to direct them to Joan Manke and he encouraged attendance at NC meetings and visiting the NCO website and getting on the hard copy mailing lists. This is a critical opportunity to send in ideas since many changes are being made.
- NCO:
 - A question was raised about the opportunity for the NCO to be relocated to the City Hall Annex. This is a matter of public access. The Commission passed a unanimous resolution and sent to the Mayor and MD to consider putting the NCO in the refurbished annex to be completed next year. It might be helpful if the boards pass this resolution in their meetings as well.
 - There is a NCO newsletter and it will be instituted once again. There will most likely be a quarterly edition and it will be electronic. Manke acknowledged this is an excellent form of communication..
- Neighborhood Board Elections:
 - In 2007 election, paper ballots were used for contested seat elections, but in uncontested areas, paper ballots were not sent as in past years. The online voting was a pilot project, which gave an alternative to the paper ballots. Public Service Announcements (PSA) and advertisements in midweek were used to advertise the election. The rate of voting was 28%, which was better than previous years.
 - For the coming 2009 election there will be an option of going online. The NCO brought a proposed budget before City Council, who recommended only using online ballots and therefore, cut the NCO budget. The online voting was only 10% of ballots cast.
 - The Commission has established a PIG to find the best solution and ensure that the right to vote is open to everyone. No decisions have been made yet, but there is a difficult task at hand in order to decide how to direct the budget of \$180,000. If the decision is made that all ballots will be cast online, there is a possibility of setting up laptops at Honolulu Hale and other various places. The main goal is to increase citizen participation in voting.
 - Boundary amendments can be addressed through a petition and the Commission can initiate proceedings to change the boundaries. Manke is reviewing the need to redefine the boundaries because of the growing population in West Oahu.
 - A concern was raised about vacancies in certain sub-districts and whether or not board members or sub-district seats can be added or deleted. Manke said the process would be to amend the board's initiative petition and re-draw district lines in order to change seats. This would then be presented to the Commission and a public hearing held in the respective community. The Commission would then review and make a decision. As the population changes, this is something the Boards are encouraged to review.

- Manke provided a summary of election costs from the 2007 election which was approximately \$300,000; noting that the on-line vendor cost would decrease by \$100,000 for the 2009 election.

IX. CLOSING REMARKS: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Prepared by NCO Staff